

REMARKS

The Final Office Action mailed May 21, 2007 has been carefully considered. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Interview Record

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the courtesy and consideration extended to applicant's undersigned representative during the telephone interview with Examiner Brown on August 13, 2007. In advance of the interview, a proposed claim amendment, submitted for discussion purposes only, was forwarded to Examiner Brown on August 8, 2008.

During the interview, the Examiner indicated that the proposed claim limitation of "storing the link list on the server" would constitute a new issue for consideration. Examiner Brown further indicated that some of the differences between the invention and Pierre that were articulated during the interview were not reflected in the claims. No agreement was reached with respect to any of the claims. Pierre was the only reference discussed.

Rejection(s) Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 103(a) based on Pierre

Claims 1-10, 14-17, 19-22, 24-27 and 29-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Pierre (U.S. pat. no. 7,000,245). Claims 11-13, 18, 23, 28 and 33-43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Pierre (U.S. pat. no. 7,000,245).

The present invention as claimed generates a distribution list that defines a distribution order of video data to a user terminal and includes a link name that links to video data as a distribution request destination, generates a link list that is a correspondence list between the link name and a video data file name corresponding to the link name, stores the link list into a video distribution system, and updates the video data file name in the link list to another video data file name depending on distribution conditions. The updating is conducted exclusively by the video distribution system.

Differences

The system structure on which the present invention is based is different from that on which Pierre is based.

In the present invention, a video distribution system acquires video data in response to a distribution request from a user terminal, and distributes the acquired video data to the user terminal. That is, two-way communication is performed between the user terminal and the video distribution system.

In contrast, Pierre is directed to a system which transmits information in a carousel format without requiring a return path from receiving stations to a broadcast station, and the receiving stations simply wait until the next time information is broadcast and then extract the information from the broadcast data stream (column 1, lines 49-56). That is, Pierre is merely a broadcast system which transmits carousels from the broadcast station to the receiving stations in an unsolicited (one-sided) manner.

The present invention generates not only the distribution list but also the link list. Moreover, the present invention stores the link list into a video distribution system, and the updating of the link list is conducted exclusively by the video distribution system.

In contrast, Pierre does not disclose both a distribution list and a link list as explained in the response to the previous Office Action, let alone a link list stored into a video distribution system, with and the updating of the link list conducted exclusively by the video distribution system. The assertions made in the "Response to Arguments" in the outstanding Office Action merely point out a carousel, a file table/directory, a reference, and live data of Pierre in the same manner as the previous Office Action.

In the present invention, the user terminal requests the distribution of the link name in the distribution list to the video distribution system, the video distribution system refers to the link list stored in the video distribution system itself to acquire a video data file name corresponding

to the requested link name, and distributes video data in a video data file designated by the acquired video data file name to the user terminal.

In contrast, in Pierre, no requests for distribution are performed from the receiving stations to the broadcast station; the receiving stations merely receive carousels transmitted from the broadcast station in an unsolicited manner. Each receiving station parses a received carousel into data objects, stores the data objects into a mass storage device (FIG. 1) that is disposed at a receiving station side, and accesses the mass storage device in response to a request for playback of a program from a user, to playback the program. Moreover, when the received carousel refers to a data object of another carousel (e.g., a live data object) or a data object stored in the mass storage device (FIG. 3), the receiving station acquires the data object by receiving the other carousel from the broadcast station or by accessing the mass storage device.

When updating (replacing) video data that is to be distributed to the user terminal, the present invention updates the video data file name in the link list stored in the video distribution system to another video data file name by means of the exclusive operation by the video distribution system. That is, updating of the video data file name is performed at a video distribution system side, and the user terminal is not involved in updating operations of the video data file name.

By comparison, in Pierre, the broadcast station constructs a new carousel including updated data objects, and transmits the constructed carousel to the receiving stations. Each of the receiving stations receives the new carousel, acquires the updated data objects therefrom, and replaces old data objects stored in the mass storage device with the updated data objects. In this way, in Pierre, not only the broadcast station but also the receiving stations are involved in the updating operations.

The present invention updates the video data file name in the link list stored in the video distribution system to another video data file name in accordance with distribution conditions by means of the exclusive operation by the video distribution system. The distribution conditions include distribution time information that designates time and duration for distribution,

distribution area information that designates a distribution area, cumulative distribution number information that limits the cumulative number of distributions, and attribute information about a user (see dependent Claim 2). Moreover, distribution conditions that are different in respective users may be used (see dependent Claim 44).

In contrast, Pierre merely mentions the updating of data objects in the carousels. Pierre neither discloses nor suggests any criteria by which Pierre constructs carousels that include updated data objects, let alone updating in accordance with distribution conditions such as cumulative distribution number information and attribute information about a user, and updating in accordance with distribution conditions that are different in respective users.

Advantages of Present Invention over Pierre

The present invention stores the link list into the video distribution system, and the updating of the link list is conducted exclusively by the video distribution system. As a result, the video distribution system can manage link lists and the updating of video data using the link lists in a unified and centralized manner.

In contrast, Pierre is not provided with a list corresponding to a link list that is stored in a video distribution system and is updated by means of the exclusive operation by the video distribution system, and the updating operations are completed at the receiving stations. Therefore, the foregoing advantages of the present invention cannot be obtained from Pierre.

The present invention can update video data by only operations at the video distribution system. Therefore, no burden with regard to updating operations is imposed on user terminals. Moreover, the present invention can achieve the updating by means of a simple operation of changing the video data file name in the link list stored in the video distribution system to another video data file name by the exclusive operation by the video distribution system. Therefore, the burden on the video distribution system can be alleviated. For instance, even if the updating is performed just before a user terminal requests distribution, the present invention can distribute updated video data to the user terminal. Furthermore, for example, even if the

updating is performed while limiting the cumulative number of distributions of video data, the present invention can perform the updating immediately when the cumulative number of distributions reaches a given limit.

In contrast, Pierre requires operations at the broadcast station that creates a new carousel including updated data objects or the current version of live data objects, and then transmits the new carousel to the receiving stations. As a result, burden on the broadcast station of Pierre is extremely large compared with that on the video distribution system of the present invention. In addition, since there are temporal restrictions and the number of carousels is limited that can be transmitted from the broadcast station at a time, with the structure of Pierre in which the broadcast station transmits new carousels of different versions, it is impossible to follow an increase in the number of data objects and live data objects that should be updated, thereby causing a situation in which updating operations are not in time. Moreover, in Pierre, the receiving stations are required to receive new carousels. Furthermore, in Pierre, it is necessary for the receiving stations to determine as to whether a received carousel is a new carousel that includes updated data objects for all the received carousels, and to update old carousels stored in the mass storage device with new carousels when these new carousels have been detected. In this way, in Pierre, a considerably large burden is imposed on the receiving stations. Moreover, the receiving stations of Pierre store old carousels, which becomes unnecessary after the updating. In addition, since Pierre periodically (in column 1, lines 34-36, every ten seconds) transmits the same carousel a plurality of times, there is a time lag until the broadcast station is allowed to transmit a new carousel (FIG. 5). As a result, combined with the foregoing complex updating operations, a considerably long time is required from when the broadcast station starts constructing a new carousel to when the receiving stations complete the updating operations.

In the present invention, the video distribution system performs the updating in accordance with distribution conditions. Therefore, when the distribution condition is, for example, the attribute information about a user (see dependent Claim 2), the present invention can update the video data file name in the link list in accordance with attributes of respective users (e.g., gender, age, hobbies, tastes, etc., as disclosed in the embodiments of the present application). Similarly, when the distribution conditions are different in respective users (see

dependent Claim 44), the video data file name in the link list can be updated for respective users. Moreover, even when the distribution condition is, for example, the information that limits the cumulative number of distributions, the present invention can perform the updating by detecting that the cumulative number of distributions reaches a given limit because the video distribution system can count the cumulative number of distributions based on distribution requests from individual user terminals. Furthermore, it is not always necessary for the present invention to perform the updating when the cumulative number of distributions reaches a given limit; rather, it is sufficient for the present invention to distribute updated video data to the individual user terminals when these user terminals request distribution at different timings.

In contrast, Pierre employs a broadcast scheme in which the broadcast station transmits carousels to the receiving stations in an unsolicited manner. As a result, Pierre cannot distribute carousels having different contents for different users. For instance, it is impossible for Pierre to transmit the carousel of version 5 to a receiving station while transmitting the carousel of version 6 to another receiving station. In addition, Pierre does not take such a situation into consideration. Moreover, in Pierre, the broadcast station transmits carousels to the receiving stations in an unsolicited manner, and the receiving stations play back a program in accordance with requests for playback of the program from users. Therefore, it is not known to the broadcast station which users the program has actually been distributed to, and thus the broadcast station cannot even count the cumulative number of distributions. Thus, unlike the present invention, Pierre cannot perform the updating based on distribution conditions such as the attribute information about a user and information about the limitation in the cumulative number of distributions, or perform updating based on distribution conditions that are different in respective users. Furthermore, even if it were possible to allocate broadcast channels that are dedicated to respective receiving stations for all the receiving stations (something that is not feasible in practical systems), it is necessary for the broadcast station to inform all the receiving stations which broadcast channel the respective receiving stations should receive carousels from. In addition, when, for example, the updating should be performed in accordance with the attribute information about a user, the broadcast station must construct different carousels for different receiving stations and then transmit these carousels to all the receiving stations simultaneously when the updating must be performed. As a result, a significantly large burden is imposed on the

broadcast station, and a problem with regard to congestion of a network arises. Moreover, because of the limitation in the number of carousels that can be transmitted from the broadcast station at a time as well as the temporal constraints as explained above, it becomes impossible to follow an increase in the number of the receiving stations (users), thereby causing the situation in which updating operations cannot be performed in a timely fashion.

Newly-Added Claims

Claims 44 has been added to further particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention.

Conclusion

In view of the preceding discussion, Applicants respectfully urge that the claims of the present application define patentable subject matter and should be passed to allowance.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone call would help advance prosecution of the present invention, the Examiner is kindly invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number below.

Please charge any additional required fees, including those necessary to obtain extensions of time to render timely the filing of the instant Amendment and/or Reply to Office Action, or credit any overpayment not otherwise credited, to our deposit account no. 50-1698.

Respectfully submitted,
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